

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 346 974

PS 020 588

AUTHOR Bell, Theresa; And Others
TITLE Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal: An Intergenerational Telephone Reassurance Program for School-Age Children. How-to-Manual.
INSTITUTION Tressler-Lutheran Service Association, Inc., Camp Hill, PA.
SPONS AGENCY Pennsylvania State Dept. of Aging, Harrisburg.
PUB DATE Jun 87
CONTRACT 866005
NOTE 63p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; Community Services; Elementary Education; *Helping Relationship; *Intergenerational Programs; *Latchkey Children; *Older Adults; Program Descriptions; Program Development; *Telephone Communications Systems; Volunteers; *Volunteer Training
IDENTIFIERS *Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal Program PA

ABSTRACT

The Mechanicsburg Area (Pennsylvania) Phone Pal Program is a telephone reassurance program in which an older volunteer calls a child who is home alone before or after school. Calls are made at the same time each day. These daily calls provide both younger and older persons with a safety verification, in addition to fellowship. Phone Pal is especially appropriate for children between the ages of 8 and 13. The Phone Pal model is easily adaptable to service networks and has minimal needs for equipment, space, staffing, and funding. This manual offers guidance on replicating the program in other communities. Section 1 provides an overview of the program, describes the social problems it addresses, defines "latchkey" and "intergenerational programs," and underscores the value of intergenerational responses to the latchkey situation. Section 2 focuses on the Phone Pal Pilot, describing the older adults and children who participate, benefits to both groups, program setting and site, interagency coordination, recruitment, and program evaluation. Section 3 offers guidelines on program replication, covering the following steps: (1) validating the program philosophy; (2) assessing needs; (3) designing the model by identifying supporters, defining expectations, securing funding, selecting staff, determining the site, and scheduling start-up activities; (4) recruiting and training the older adults and recruiting the young participants; (5) making the connections between the volunteers and the children and monitoring the participants' progress; and (6) evaluating the project. Sections IV and V offer recommendations about program planning and a summary. Appendixes contain budget, staffing, training, and promotional information, and other relevant materials. (AC)

ED 346 974

PS 020588

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it

[] Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal

*...an Intergenerational Telephone Reassurance
Program
for School Age Children*

HOW-TO-MANUAL

A program of
Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc.
with funding provided by
Pennsylvania Department of Aging

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Marilyn S.
Chastek

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

MECHANICSBURG AREA PHONE PAL
an intergenerational telephone reassurance program
for school-age children

June 1987

a program of



Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc.
2331 Market Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 761-6920

Prepared by:

Theresa Bell, Program Coordinator
Kathy Bell, Intergenerational Program Specialist
Marilyn Chastek, Director, Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center

This document was produced with funds provided under
contract #866005 from the Pennsylvania Department of Aging.

Robert P. Casey
Governor

Linda M. Rhodes, Ed.D
Secretary of Aging

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
 I. INTRODUCTION	
A. Overview	1
B. Problem Statement	1
C. Definitions	2
1. Latchkey	2
2. Intergenerational Programs	2
D. Intergenerational Responses to Latchkey Problem	3
 II. PHONE PAL PROGRAM	
A. Background	3
B. Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal Pilot	3
1. Older Participants	4
2. Youth Participants	4
3. Intergenerational Experiences	4
a. Benefits to Senior Volunteers	4
b. Benefits to Youth Participants	6
4. Program Setting and Site	8
5. Inter-Agency Coordination	8
6. Recruitment	9
7. Program Evaluation	10
 III. HOW TO REPLICATE PROGRAM	
A. Validate Philosophy	10
B. Assess Need	10
1. Gather Information	11
2. Analyze Data	11
3. Use Findings	12
C. Design Model	12
1. Identify Supporters	12
2. Define Expectations	13
3. Secure Funding	14
4. Select Staff	15
5. Determine Site	16
6. Schedule Program Startup	16

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	Page
D. Recruit	17
1. Determine Approach	17
2. Contact Media	18
3. Schedule Public Appearances	18
4. Prepare Promotional Material	19
5. Recruit Seniors	20
a. Approach	20
b. Train	21
c. Approve	22
6. Recruit Youth	23
a. Approach	23
b. Enroll	23
E. Prepare Connections	24
1. Introduce Pairs	24
2. Monitor Progress	25
3. Plan Events	25
F. Evaluate Project	25
IV. RECOMMENDATIONS	26
V. SUMMARY	28
VI. APPENDICES	
1. Budget Outline	
2. Position Description: Project Manager	
3. Position Description: Secretary	
4. Media Invitation	
4a. News Release	
5. Senior Phone Pal Flyer	
6. Junior Phone Pal Flyer	
6a. Junior Phone Pal Enrollment Flyer	
7. Senior Phone Pal Application	
8. Senior Phone Pal Training Schedule	
9. Phone Pal Participant Responsibilities	
10. Authorization to Videotape	
11. Junior Phone Pal Enrollment	
12. Implementation Timetable	

PREFACE

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal is one community's response to the growing need for programs to serve the school-age child. The model is a telephone reassurance program that connects school-age children who are on their own before and/or after school, with an older volunteer.

The telephone connections made from the security of the participants' own home provides both younger and older persons with a safety verification, in addition to friendly conversation and fellowship.

The model this manual illustrates is especially appropriate for children and youth ages 8-13 and older persons who might be frail, disabled, or active and well but, more importantly, who care for and enjoy children and have the capacity to relate to them through regular telephone conversations.

The program can be initiated by anyone who is concerned about the needs of the school-age child and the older persons in their community. The strength of this program is the formation of an interdisciplinary, interorganizational advisory group to facilitate the development of the model.

This program is not appropriate for every child. Program staff consider those under eight years old to be NOT adequately serviced by a single daily phone call - nor is this concept suited for every community. For example, communities without a significantly large older population, or with few families whose children are on their own before or after school, may not recognize a need for a structured program.

It is, however, a model that is easily adaptable to existing service networks and, due to its minimal need for equipment, office space, staff and financial support, should be considered either as a new independent program option or, in conjunction with other models of before and after-school care.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal exists because of the creativity, generosity and support of many persons and organizations. Thus, it is with gratitude that the following be formally recognized for their contributions.

Darrel Lauer, Staff Manager Constituency Affairs, Southwestern Bell, St. Louis, Missouri, who was the original creator of the Phone Pal model and developer of pilots in Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. It is due to his technical assistance and ever-present guidance that Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal could be realized.

Marietta King, Chief, Division of Education & Training, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Aging, for the Department's acceptance of the Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal Proposal and her continual support throughout the implementation of the pilot program.

Clarence Edwin Williams, Chairman of the Board and CEO, The Bates Manufacturing Company, Hackettstown, New Jersey, which holds a trademark for "Phone Pal," for permission to include the term in the program's title and materials.

R. L. Singiser and Margaret Messner, Mechanicsburg Area School District for their participation in each phase of the project's development and implementation and for enabling project staff access to district staff and meetings.

Leroy Robinson, Manager, Community Relations, Bell of Pennsylvania, for the corporation's willingness to underwrite printing and recruitment costs in addition to providing technical assistance throughout the project's implementation.

Judy Shuey, Administrator, Cumberland County Office of Aging, for the agency's endorsement of the project and expertise in identifying the needs and resources in the aging community.

Louis Tomes, Administrator, Telephone Pioneers of America, L. H. Kinnard Chapter, for his time and assistance during the project's development and implementation.

The people of Mechanicsburg who encouraged and supported the development of the first Pennsylvania Phone Pal project in their community.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal was developed under a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Aging that funded a pilot program during the Winter and Spring of 1986-1987. It was implemented by Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc., in partnership with Bell of Pennsylvania, Mechanicsburg Area School District and the Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center.

The material included in this manual should be easily transferrable to other communities wishing to develop a similar project. However, sponsors should be aware that all communities have their own personality with formal and informal structures that can enable or inhibit a new program's development. Therefore, the planning process should use the materials contained herein for the purpose of identifying equivalent factors and sources in the community. However, this manual should not replace the essential local planning process of developing community support required for a successful program.

A Phone Pal project should not be expected to create itself. In spite of its streamlined structure and its apparently simplistic organization, Phone Pal is a challenging project to initiate. However, we believe that, with the material provided, any community will have the information necessary to evaluate the appropriateness of the model to their needs and the tools required to effectively develop the program.

B. Problem Statement

The primary concerns which led to the development of this project were threefold:

1. Older persons often lack the opportunity for meaningful activities which utilize their vast resource of personal skills, their flexibility of time, their years of parenting experience, and their compassion for others. Consequently, many older persons no longer feel needed or valued by society. This lack of purpose frequently leads to premature physical and emotional deterioration--and an immeasurable loss to our society.

2. A dramatically increasing number of young, school-age children spend several hours in their homes before and/or after school without adult supervision. This circumstance often occurs primarily due to the increased number of families in which both parents work outside of the home, and the growing number of single-parent families. This lack of supervision and contact with adults during this period results in potentially hazardous situations, loneliness, fear of entering an empty house, and/or despair for many children.
3. Largely because of our highly transient society, there no longer exists the strong intergenerational life experiences that, in past generations, provided the personal contact which enabled better understanding and appreciation between generations. This condition has also contributed to rapid changes in traditional value systems.

C. Definitions

1. Latchkey: The term Latchkey children was coined during World War II to identify those youngsters who were regularly left without adult supervision before and after school. This label resulted from the fact that many children wore a key on a shoestring around their necks with which to let themselves into their homes. That period in our nation's history marked the beginning of a dramatic social and economic phenomenon that, today, impacts on the lives of millions of children.
2. Intergenerational Programs: According to the National Council on Aging, Inc., are "activities that increase cooperation, interaction or exchange between generations." They involve sharing skills, knowledge or experience between old and young.. These programs have innovatively succeeded in dispelling age related myths, strengthened community ties, and tapped resources to meet human needs. Intergenerational programs can simultaneously develop meaningful roles and provide a needed service. Generally developed to achieve a particular goal, cross-age programs often realize secondary or unexpected benefits. It is also possible to address a particular need(s) through different program models.

D. Intergenerational Responses to Latchkey Problem

After-school intergenerational programs can offer important opportunities to concurrently confront social issues effecting families and older persons. Older citizens have effectively served in a variety of programs that assist school-age children. Specifically, while involved in a school-age child program, elder citizens are able to experience restored meaning to their lives by providing direct care and service to young children. The children can contribute their youthful vitality, enthusiasm, and inquisitiveness to the daily lives of older persons. At the same time, they gain the security of contact with a responsible adult when their parents cannot be present to supervise them. Both the children and the older persons gain an increased appreciation of each other through their shared personal relationships in a creatively-structured program.

II. PHONE PAL PROGRAM

A. Background

The Phone Pal telephone reassurance program was created by Southwestern Bell in partnership with local school districts and area agencies on aging. Initially developed in one public school district in Saint Louis, Missouri, and one in El Dorado, Arkansas, new projects will soon be operating throughout those states. The 1986-1987 academic year introduced a program in two districts in Texas and one in Oklahoma. Southwestern Bell anticipates development of a statewide program in Texas and Oklahoma by the 1987-1988 school year.

B. Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal Pilot

Closely modeled on Southwestern Bell's projects, Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal is a telephone reassurance program which can provide latchkey children with an older adult connection each day upon their return from school and, if requested, before they leave for school. Children and older persons participating in the program are paired according to need, availability, interests, personality, and location of residence. After screening and orientation, the pairs, including the children's parents, determine the frequency, duration and scheduling of the phone calls. Generally, phone calls are made soon after the child arrives homes from school.

The program recruited seniors in the Mechanicsburg area who were living in their own homes or in senior residential facilities.

Children, ages 8-13 attending school in the Mechanicsburg Area School District, were targeted for program participation.

Participation in the program was on a voluntary basis and without charge. In addition to the daily phone reassurance, the program could provide learning/social events on a regular basis with opportunities for the Phone Pal pairs and their families to broaden their phone relationship on an in-person basis.

1. Elder participants

The program is able to recruit, screen, train and pair up to 50 older persons for participation as Phone Pals. These older persons are recruited from the Mechanicsburg area. The Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center is the focal point of this recruitment effort. Seniors are also recruited through area senior groups, churches, and other service agencies.

The program operates with the support of an Advisory Group with representation from the Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center, the Area Agency on Aging, Bell of Pennsylvania, senior Phone Pals and other seniors from the Mechanicsburg community.

2. Youth Participants

The program has the capacity to serve 50 children. Targeted children are enrolled in the public schools and ages 8-13; however, children outside those ages are considered on an individual basis.

Although not targeted for the program, children enrolled in local private and parochial schools, or public schools outside the district, are able to participate, depending upon program capacity.

3. Intergenerational Experiences

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal provides a wide variety of intergenerational experiences to the older persons, the children and their families.

a. Benefits to the Senior Volunteer

Participation in the program provides each older person and child the opportunity for daily conversation with their Phone Pal. Phone Pals are friends checking on one another's well-being. The senior Phone Pal is not a disciplinarian or supervisor of the children's activities.

For the senior adult without current parenting duties, he or she once again is an important part of a youth's growth and development without the burden of full responsibility for that young person.

The senior Phone Pal is able to check on the junior Phone Pal's day--providing a mom's or dad's function if they were able to be home ... "How was your day? ... How did the math test go? ... Is Mary still bothering you on the bus? ... Tell me about history class, that was my favorite."

For the senior adults, their junior Phone Pal may be filling the gap left by physical or emotional distances from their own children or grandchildren. Or perhaps their participation is an extension of connections with their own family.

Participation provides older persons with a sense of purpose and meaning to their day. They once again have responsibilities--of their own choosing and within their own capabilities. This program design is specially suited for frail older persons living in their own homes and or any older person fearful of leaving home. The program enables these older persons to have daily opportunity to participate in a community-based program without leaving home to benefit from participation.

In addition, for the shut-in older person, participation enables a daily check on their own wellness. If the older person does not make the call as arranged or does not respond when the child rings, a contingency plan goes into action which further investigates the safety of the senior Phone Pal.

Elder Phone Pals once again use their skills in nurturance, caring and teaching, based on their lifetime of experience and growth to help a child in need of a friend, reassurance and guidance.

Orientation/training sessions provide the senior adults opportunity for continued development through their own openness to effective communication training, as well as current attitudes and philosophies about youth, families, their needs, and how to address them.

Senior Phone Pals maintain connection with a family and a community through participation in Phone Pal Socials and shared community events. The older person is enabled to experience the vitality of participation.

The program capitalizes on the dynamic personalities of older persons recruited early to the program as spokespersons. When interested and able, these senior adults, as part of a team, participate in discussions at the Mechanicsburg Senior Adult Center, in the schools, with parent groups and congregations, discussing the benefits to be experienced as participants in the program.

b. Benefits to Youth Participants

Phone Pal provides the participating child a host of intergenerational connections. The focal service of telephone linkage provides daily opportunity to connect with a grandparent or great-grandparent figure. For some children who are distant from their own grandparents, this may be their only personal connection with elders.

The junior Phone Pal can share the activities of the school day with someone while the events are fresh and powerful. Importantly, the sharing will be with someone whose focus is on their conversation, someone who has committed this special time to their Phone Pal, and someone who doesn't have to start dinner, read the mail, or clean up from breakfast, concurrently with hearing about the young person's day.

The junior Phone Pal can experience the perspective their senior Phone Pal has to offer to contemporary situations. Their senior Phone Pal can provide understanding for the youth's efforts towards growth and independence with the challenges present in today's society.

For the older child, caught in the desire for independence, but uncertain of their skill to stay home without supervision, their relationship with a senior Phone Pal provides a bridge in support of their independence and their need for safety and freedom from fear.

Their senior Phone Pal can provide them cues for feeling safe when alone, while empathizing with the young person's ambivalence regarding freedom and independence.

Evening socials and shared community events will provide the child with opportunities to enjoy their senior Phone Pal in playful and joyful ways. For some children, their Phone Pal becomes a vital member of family, being integrated into the functions and events of the home.

Daily conversations with their senior Phone Pal provides a positive alternative to the loneliness or rejections a child or youth may feel at home alone.

For some children residing in solitary nuclear families, their relationship with a senior Phone Pal may be one of the few opportunities to have a personal relationship with an adult, other than their parents, particularly an older adult. Their daily exchanges can offer a glimpse at their senior Phone Pal's world of experiences and knowledge, providing an opportunity to learn the acceptance of others through these exchanges.

Phone Pal offers its young participants the opportunity to learn "to give" through their intergenerational relationships. Through their orientation, they learn the mutual support and service that is at the core of the program philosophy. Two pals, checking on each other, there for each other. For some children, this experience may be their first opportunity to benefit from serving, their first view of the rewards of volunteering.

Most importantly, in addition to the focal service of phone linkage, the youth has ample opportunity to dispel prejudices or stereotypes about the aged and aging which may have formed, due to ignorance or isolation. As a result, the youth can be more accepting of the richness seniors have to offer a community, in spite of limitations they may concurrently have, due to the aging process.

4. Program Setting and Site

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal is operated from the Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center, 97 West Portland Street, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. This is a new facility developed cooperatively by the Borough of Mechanicsburg, the Area Agency on Aging, and Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates. Office space is provided for program staff, along with pleasant, easily accessible space for social activities and training events. The Senior Center is located near the town's central business district and is conveniently reached by automobile and public transportation, including the Center's minivans.

Although Mechanicsburg Borough is a small community (approximately 10,000), the Mechanicsburg Area School District serves the children of Mechanicsburg Borough, Shiremanstown Borough and Upper Allen Borough with six elementary, one intermediate and one high school. In 1986-1987 school year, 3,318 students were enrolled in the district. Of these, 824 were eligible by age for the project. In 1981, the average annual income in the borough was \$9,686. In 1986, 75% of the graduating students continued to post-high school education.

Telephone contacts generally occur when the participants are in their own homes. However, one of the strengths of this program is the flexibility provided through telephone linkage. For instance, if a senior Phone Pal is away from home at the time of a scheduled contact, that contact can still be made from virtually any other location with telephone service; thus, maintaining continuity of the program and the daily commitment with the child.

5. Inter-Agency Coordination

Planning for this project included administrators from Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, the Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center, the Mechanicsburg Learning Center (local day care program), the Mechanicsburg Area School District, and consultation with the Area Agency on Aging. The willingness of these organizations to cooperate enabled the timely development and implementation of the pilot.

Regularly scheduled planning and coordination occurred in Advisory Group meetings that included representatives of each of these primary organizations, along with program staff. As needs and opportunities indicated, other community organizations were included in the planning and coordination of program components.

6. Recruitment

Senior Phone Pals were recruited through personal contacts by staff, presentations to congregations and service clubs, announcements in the broadcast media and newspaper feature stores and ads. The Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center, the Area Agency on Aging, and other community services working with the older persons, were primary sources of referral. Each of these organizations was thoroughly oriented to the program.

Junior Phone Pals were recruited through the participating schools and other youth-serving organizations that were oriented to the program. Parents and children also learned of the program through media coverage.

Promotional material was developed describing the program. This was broadly disseminated throughout the community in congregations, agencies, places of employment, physicians' offices, schools, and other highly visible locations.

7. Program Evaluation

Several approaches to program evaluation were to be utilized. Upon initiation of the program, the Advisory Group identified quantifiable factors to measure program effectiveness. In addition, it was planned that subjective comments be sought from participants and other involved persons.

Prior to participation in the program, it was expected that the Phone Pals and the parents of each child would complete a brief questionnaire to identify their personal expectations of the program. At designated times during the course of their involvement in the program, they would be asked to evaluate the experience, in comparison with their initial expectations. Junior Phone Pals would be surveyed before and after program participation to determine their attitudes about aging and their involvement in the program. Several excellent, proven research tools exist to aid in this aspect of the program evaluation.

During the project period, the Advisory Group was to be available to regularly evaluate the information gathered, other input and their personal observations. At the end of the project period, a

thorough analysis of the quantifiable data and the other evaluative information was to be conducted and shared with the Department of Aging and local participating organizations.

III. HOW TO REPLICATE PHONE PAL

A. Validate Philosophy

The development of a Phone Pal project in your community must be grounded in a philosophical belief in the appropriateness of linkages between youth and older people. This belief is the cornerstone of the Phone Pal model. As with all responsible intergenerational programs, Phone Pal reinforces the concept that the young participant contributes and benefits equally with the older participant. If it is revealed that one participant group is benefiting at the expense of the other, the program is likely to fail.

If, in considering a program to serve school-age children, the planners cannot wholeheartedly embrace the dual goals of equally serving the school-age child and the older volunteer, the Phone Pal concept is not an appropriate model for you to attempt. Another model for before- and after-school care should be investigated.

B. Assess Needs

Why bother? There is no single effort as necessary to the successful development and implementation of a Phone Pal project as a well-designed assessment. It provides the necessary documentation to support the creation of a new program.

A needs assessment is basically a process of information gathering, analysis and usage. The more time and resources you have to devote to each of these areas, the more likely your success in implementation.

One of the special challenges of accomplishing an assessment for a Phone Pal project is that you must consider the school-age child and the older adult population. A clear understanding of the needs and resources existing in the older citizen population is as important as those of the school-age population.

1. Gather Information

Determine what information is already available. Has your community, school district, service organization recently studied the needs of school-age children? What about the needs of the older adult? Who has the information? How can you access it? A major source of existing information is census data. For example, information about single-parent households, median family income and age, together with the total number of households, can be obtained from your local library or planning commission. School districts can provide information on families of school-age children. Major industries, employers and organizations can provide information about the family needs of their employees and members.

It is advantageous to obtain the assistance of a trained researcher to help develop an assessment tool(s) that will enable an efficient and comprehensive gathering of data about both the school-age child and the older citizen. Any forms used should be simple and carefully developed to fill in data voids.

Information gathering should also include discussions with persons currently serving the school-age child and older citizen. These discussions will help you

- identify a wide perspective regarding need for services,
- persons of power and influence committed to addressing the needs of children and the aging,
- your community's history regarding school-age care and previous/current efforts to serve this population,
- level of resources available to assist in the development of your project,
- potential partners to support the development of a project who may also serve on your Advisory Group.

2. Analyze Data

As tabulation of information usually involves counting numbers and recording data in various categories, again, it will be helpful to secure the assistance of someone skilled in research methods and statistics who can adequately process the information you have gathered into a usable format.

An affiliation with a local college/university may confirm the availability of researchers and student interns who could help with this phase. Depending on the amount of data collected, it may be appropriate to prepare a summary of your findings for general distribution.

3. Use Findings

The information you have gathered and its analysis will prove invaluable throughout your program's development, implementation and evaluation. Its immediate benefit is in certifying the need for a new school-age program and the type of programming appropriate to your community. The distribution of the data to the media can stimulate coverage and concern for this social problem. The data distributed to community and agency leaders can be the basis for your request of their service on an Advisory Group. Overall, the information can provide validation for your concern and community support for a new program.

Although completion of a comprehensive needs assessment provides verifiable data upon which you can plan a program, it is important to note that significant uncertainties will remain. Of specific concern are:

- Clear indication of need will not guarantee willingness to participate in your program.
- The numbers of persons who may need and are eligible for your program, but who do not respond to surveys or mailings.
- Parents' hesitancy to publicize that their child(ren) is alone before and/or after school.

C. Design Model

1. Identify Supporters

Development of a Phone Pal program requires garnering both financial and human resources. Both are interdependent and not able to exist without the other. Contacts and conversations during the needs assessment process will help identify persons of power in your community who can facilitate the development of your program.

When considering a Phone Pal project, regardless of the community, you should seek the following support.

Public

- *School District (public)
- *County Area Agency on Aging
- *County Children and Youth Services
- *Local Senior Centers
- *State Department of Aging
- *State Department of Public Welfare

Private/Voluntary

- *School Systems (Private/Parochial)
- *Agencies currently serving school-age children
- *Agencies currently serving the working/single parent
- *Agencies/organizations currently serving the aging
- *Fraternal/Service Organizations known to support new programs

Corporate

- *Constituency Affairs Office of Regional Telephone Utility
- *Major/dominant employer(s) in your community.

Identify a core of individuals from each of these sectors to participate in a task force and later, on an Advisory Group/Action Team to facilitate implementation. Try to recruit individuals committed enough to assume action roles with specific responsibilities.

Turn away no offer of assistance or support, even if it is simply a letter of endorsement. The broader the support - the better are your chances for success.

2. Define Expectations

Very early in the planning process, it is important to define what is expected of your project and your partners. Specifically:

- *The community to be targeted.
- *The children and older persons to be served.
- *Eligibility/requirements (for example, income, age, geographic limits).
- *Program capacity.
- *Responsibilities of Program Partners.
- *Resources to be committed to project (both human and financial).

Clarification of these issues will enable appropriate planning and implementation of the program. Sharing this information in writing will help assure clarity among those involved in each aspect of your project.

3. Secure Funding

As previously noted, the Phone Pal design is streamlined and requires little overhead, staffing or tangible resources. Depending on your community, development of the project can be integrated with existing programs and functions absorbed by current staff. If resources are available, selection of staff to work exclusively with the project can occur. Obviously, development of a project by existing staff will limit personnel costs significantly. In addition to personnel costs, if any, planners should develop a budget to determine the needs of the program in comparison with available resources. (Note Appendix 1 for budget outline.)

Procurement of funds for new programs can often be a frustrating process. Requests for funding from public agencies and foundations may result in months of delay. Support from local businesses and organizations, although possibly easier to process, may be more limited in dollars or solely "in-kind" assistance.

It is possible that a consortium of support from several sources may enable your program to get off the ground. This could result in more short-term or even long-range support. However, procurement of long-term funding always should be a priority.

Regardless of the challenges, funding is possible. Experience and training in grantmanship will greatly enhance the possibility of positive responses to requests. Many community libraries offer workshops and have resource materials regarding fund raising for non-profit organizations. Take advantage of this assistance, often available at little or no charge. Resource persons can also direct you to potential funding sources, particularly those which focus their support in your geographic area or on your type of program. They can also help you identify the funding cycles that may coincide with your implementation goals and schedules.

Take advantage of the resources and skills existing among your program's partners. It is possible that most of the program's expenses can be absorbed by the various participating organizations. Local businesses are often willing to provide financial and/or "in-kind" services related to their particular service (i.e., a local printer might donate paper for flyers; a baker, the food for your training sessions; a TV station, technicians to put together a Public Service Announcement). Always acknowledge any support you receive in your promotional materials.

The cornerstone of the development of service programs today is creativity and flexibility. Identify your ideal but be willing to adjust your ideas to correspond with certain existing conditions if it will help to achieve your goals.

4. Select Staff

The Mechanicsburg program created a design that called for a half-time project manager and a secretary to work ten hours per week exclusively on Phone Pal (see Appendix 2, 3). Availability of staff early in the program's development process has definite benefits, as they can devote full attention to development and implementation. The Mechanicsburg program staff were also primarily responsible for sustaining the linkages between the partners and participating organizations. Establishment of the two staff positions significantly increased the costs of the project.

Reportedly, no Southwestern Bell models include staff positions in their designs. Program responsibilities are shared among the project partners and absorbed into their other daily responsibilities. This practice, of course, depends on the individuals' availability and their willingness to take on these tasks and responsibilities.

Your choice of design will depend largely on available resources. However, one option is to establish paid staff positions for the planning and initial implementation stages of your project with the expectations that ongoing operation will become the responsibility of the program partners.

Utilization of volunteer staff may enable you to achieve the best of both worlds. There may be individuals in your community who are committed to children, who would not consider being a Phone Pal, but would assist with organizational needs of the project.

5. Determine Site

Your Phone Pal project should have a home! One location where records are maintained and where inquiries, applications and enrollment forms can be directed and processed is a must. Close proximity to one of the populations targeted is advised and beneficial, but not mandatory. For example, a school or senior center would be appropriate. Availability of a site exclusively for Phone Pal will depend on your funding options; however, donation of space could be an appropriate contribution of one of the program's partners or other community resource.

6. Schedule Program Startup

Scheduling the introduction of Phone Pal in your community will depend on a variety of factors. Funding cycles, availability of staff/volunteer resources, and immediacy of need, are a few of the issues that will determine the program's starting date. In spite of these potential contingencies, operation of your Phone Pal project should coincide with the beginning of the school year, as most parents arrange for child care during the summer months and plan for an entire year's service. To reach maximum effectiveness, your project should coincide with this cycle, as parents tend to resist changing their plans of care midyear, even for a potentially good service.

The creation of a planning and implementation timetable will help delineate the tasks, areas of individual responsibility and determine the most timely implementation of your project (see Appendix 12).

D. Recruit

1. Determine Approach

One of the challenges of Phone Pal is that recruitment efforts must be directed to distinct populations.

- * Older Persons
- * School-Age Children
- * Parents

Each of these groups' interest must be stimulated. This can be done best by recognizing the respective needs and using different approaches. Some factors to be recognized are:

Older Persons

- * Their skill and wisdom gained over a lifetime.
- * Belief in their continued interest and desire to serve their community.
- * Concern for their own safety while living alone.
- * Loneliness and desire for companionship.
- * Desire to be connected with family after experiencing loss of their own.

Children

- * Desire for grandparent-type relationships.
- * Desire for someone to talk to upon their return from school.
- * Opportunity to make a new friend with sincere interest in them.
- * Relief of fears and concerns about being left alone.
- * Support of their budding independence.
- * Opportunity to provide a volunteer service to an older person.

Parents

- * Desire to provide a safety link for their children.
- * Interest in providing child(ren) with grandparent-type relationship.
- * Relief of worry about their child(ren) while at work.
- * Concern about "going public" about their child's lack of supervision after school.
- * Uncertainty about timing of their child's self supervision.

Thus, creativity is imperative when developing a comprehensive publicity campaign.

2. Contact Media

To officially kick off your program, a press conference can provide intensive coverage by print and broadcast media. Invitations to media representatives and a press release will help stimulate their interest and willingness to attend your press conference (See Appendix 4, 4a).

Coverage can include feature stories, news items and public service announcements. All are typically provided at no charge to the program. Contact should be made through the station/newspaper news director or editor.

3. Schedule Public Appearances

Project representatives should be available to make presentations to organizations and groups in your community. Take advantage of all existing networks to spread the word. Many civic organizations plan their program schedules during the summer months; therefore, contact their chairpersons and request an opportunity to be included in their agendas. In addition, many organizations with newsletters often are looking for articles and announcements.

If you are not familiar with the existing networks in your community, meet someone who has this knowledge. A listing of congregations, schools, organizations and agencies, together with names of contact persons, can expedite your efforts significantly.

The more information you are able to disseminate in your community, the more likely you are to gain support and reach capacity enrollment.

Keeping in mind that you wish to inform parents, children and older persons, the following groups can provide you access and facilitate your connections.

- *Congregations (churches and temples)
Councils, Boards, Men's, Women's and Youth Groups

- *School District Sponsored Meetings
Principals, Teachers, Counselors, Parents, Student Clubs

***Fraternal/Civic Organizations**

Optomist, Civic Leagues, Welcome Wagon, Newcomers, Kiwanis, Junior League, Rotary, Lions, Women's/Men's Clubs, American Business Women Association, etc.

***Older Persons' Organizations**

Senior Centers, Retirement Groups, Senior Residential Facilities, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Some human service organizations and volunteer centers publish directories of all organizations and groups which meet in their community. Access to this kind of directory can provide you with the name of contacts, schedule and time of meetings and procedures for gaining access.

4. Prepare Promotional Material

Development of a clear and concise brochure is mandatory. It provides interested persons and potential participants with a record of the program concepts, components and a means to reach you. Phone Pal, because of its design, suggests development of three brochures which are targeted to

- *potential senior volunteers (Senior Phone Pals)
- *parents
- *potential youth participants (Junior Phone Pals)

If limited resources inhibit the development of three brochures, the child and parent content can be combined into one brochure.

Design of your brochure will be influenced by available resources. A professionally designed, multi-color and folded brochure will certainly make a statement. However, an informal flyer may serve equally well and permit production and distribution of more copies (see Appendix 5, 6, 6a).

Printing costs may be provided as an "in-kind" service or at a reduced rate by a program partner or local printer.

Distribution of the brochures can occur through school and organizational mailings generally at no cost to the program. The value of direct mailing to potential participants is uncertain and very expensive.

5. Recruit Seniors

a. Approach

Phone Pal senior volunteers are expected, with staff support and monitoring, to provide their service without supervision or observation. The relationships between senior and junior Phone Pals can be expected to be personal and confidential. As a result, intensive screening of senior volunteer candidates is essential.

Screening includes application, reference verification, personal in-home interview, training and parent approval.

Recruiters should look for older persons who are friendly, relatively open, caring and interested in children and their well-being. Senior volunteers should be able to communicate in an easy and understanding manner with their young Phone Pal. The existence of physical limitations or frailties should not be a disqualifying factor and should be considered only as the condition might impact the volunteer's ability to relate.

Older persons can be recruited through local senior, civic and congregational groups. Interested seniors should complete an application form that requests at least two references (see Appendix 7).

The project manager or designee should review applications, verify references and schedule an in-home interview. References should be able to: report the length and nature of their relationship; provide information about the candidate's responsibility; interests; citizenship; approach with children; and physical ability to participate in the project. The in-home interview provides insight regarding the candidate's apparent demeanor in his/her setting and whether they are able to care for and be responsible for their environment. Upon completion of this phase, the candidate should be scheduled for training.

b. Train

Orientation/training sessions provide senior candidates an opportunity for continued growth and development by exposing them to effective communication skills, as well as current attitudes and philosophies about youth, families, their needs and how to address them. It is important to enlist the assistance of your Advisory Group to designate qualified person(s) to help prepare and present the training material.

If this is not possible, contact a local family services agency or crisis intervention program for individuals who could help develop your content and possibly provide trainers.

A four-hour training program is used by the Mechanicsburg project (see Appendix 8). This includes:

- * Communications
 - Effective ways to communicate (verbal/nonverbal)
 - Expectations
 - Building relationships
- * Managing Emergencies
 - Potential problems/concerns that may occur
 - Techniques
 - How to stay calm
 - Available resources
- * Today's child
 - Their interests and concerns
 - Talking to youth
 - Effective listening skills
- * Expectations of Program Participation
- * Responsibilities (see Appendix 9)

The duration of training will depend somewhat on the stamina of the participants, availability of presenters and the host facility. Provision of lunch is recommended and, if provided, should be scheduled midway through the training session. This provides a break for nourishment, fellowship and discussion.

Presenters should be aware of adult learning processes and techniques appropriate for the senior learner. Be aware of the special learning needs of older participants due to hearing or visual impairments. Handouts should be clear, concise and with large print.

Presenters should strive to make the sessions interactive, rather than lecture. The group size and location of training should encourage discussion and conversation about the content.

Utilization of their new skills will be the true determinant of the value of the training program. It will be helpful to schedule a follow-up session (approximately two hours) after one or two months of program participation. This is to review techniques, evaluate program satisfaction and provide new material, as necessary.

Audio and visual taping of the training sessions can be very helpful:

- * for use with senior volunteers unable to leave their home.
- * to replay in subsequent training sessions.
- * for the presenter's self-evaluation and review.
- * as reference when preparing subsequent training sessions (see Appendix 10).

c. Approve

Upon satisfactory completion of the application and training process, volunteer candidates should be formally notified of their acceptance in the program. You may choose to develop a congratulatory letter and/or certificates of completion. Both will encourage the senior's enhanced self confidence and self esteem.

Concurrently, if, at any point, a candidate is viewed as inappropriate for the program, inform them of your concern in person and explain its basis. A personal exchange will provide opportunity to confirm your misgivings or alleviate them. Written confirmation of your decision should be provided.

6. Recruit Youth

a. Approach

Phone Pal is targeted to school-age children, ages 8-13. It is believed these children are most able to benefit from the phone contacts and provide their senior Phone Pal with companionship in return. The program is considered inadequate for children under eight and of limited interest to children over thirteen.

Called junior Phone Pals, youth are recruited through their parents, participating schools, area congregations and community organizations. Presentations can be made directly to children and/or to their parents while attending school functions or community activities.

Program brochures and enrollment forms should be distributed and made available to anyone expressing interest in the service.

School district officials may assist in the distribution process by enclosing program flyers in mailings to parents and families or sending them home with the children. Signs posted in areas accessible to children and parents, such as schools and markets, will also promote enrollment.

Participation in other intergenerational programs that encourage communication between child and senior adult, will also enhance a child's interest in participating in Phone Pal.

School staff, depending on willingness and availability, can also help promote the program and encourage the children to secure their parents' permission to participate.

b. Enroll

There is no application process for youth participants. They simply indicate their desire, complete an enrollment form and obtain their parents' authorization (see Appendix 11).

Your program should develop an enrollment form that provides identifying information; indicates the child's need for service, times and days that calls are requested; names and phone numbers of persons to be contacted in an emergency, and the characteristics and particular interests of the child. The enrollment form should then be reviewed by the project manager or designee to identify an approved volunteer for pairing.

Programmers must identify early if there will be any restrictions regarding a child's eligibility. If a system other than "first-come, first-served" is to be used, program staff should understand this and be able to communicate these restrictions. Human and fiscal resources available to the program, the geographic area to be served and the availability of approved senior Phone Pals, are determining factors when considering restrictions.

E. Prepare Connections

Program staff should tentatively pair the approved senior Phone Pals and their junior counterparts by document comparison focusing on:

- geographic location.
- family and cultural background.
- hobbies and interests.
- needs/availability of service.

1. Introduce Pairs

Staff should schedule an opportunity for the senior Phone Pal, child and parents to meet for final clarification of needs and expectations. At that meeting, the frequency, duration and scheduling of phone calls is determined.

This meeting provides all concerned with an opportunity to gain an increased appreciation of each other, through their shared personal relationship in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Parents' agreement is required prior to any confirmation of a pairing.

2. Monitor Progress

The project manager or designee should be responsible for monitoring the progress of the senior/junior pairings. Periodic participant interviews at specific intervals (for example, two weeks, one month, three months) should be scheduled to ascertain if the arrangement is working and acceptable to all. This provides ongoing opportunity for questions and problem review. The information gathered by the project manager provides useful data for implementing new ideas and making necessary changes in the program setup and senior training programs.

3. Plan Events

Sponsored social events can provide opportunities for Senior and Junior Phone Pals and their families to extend their phone relationships through personal contact. These may be designed exclusively for program participants, such as a "covered dish," ice cream social, barbeque or sporting event. A Phone Pal program can also provide personal contacts by taking advantage of existing community events, such as sponsored trips to county fairs, ball games, commercial theatres or historical sites.

It should be determined in advance if the program will support (informal) personal contacts between the paired Phone Pals. Neither the Southwestern Bell or Mechanicsburg projects endorse this practice due to concerns for program liability in the event of an accident or incident.

F. Evaluate Project

Much of your energy has been devoted to the start-up of your program. However, of equal importance, is the process of ongoing planning, evaluation and nurturance of your project. The timetable for implementation should include long-term goals and ongoing assessment of all program components. The Advisory Group can be especially helpful in monitoring program impact and making recommendations for program change or adaptation.

Regular review of the implementation timetable will help you stay on schedule (Appendix 12).

Take advantage of this program's natural cycle which should coincide with the school year. Utilize summer months for in-depth evaluation and reorganization (as needed) in preparation for the end of summer vacations and restart of your service in the fall.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Phone Pal has been successful in many communities in the Southwestern United States. Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal, the first in Pennsylvania, was successful in many ways. In spite of Phone Pal's streamlined features, intensive planning and study is required prior to the successful replication of Phone Pal in any community.

Recommendation 1: That the following considerations be included in any effort to develop a Phone Pal model.

- Know Your Community
 - Persons of power and influence
 - Services provided
 - Organizations
 - History of services
- Identify Community Needs
 - School-age children
 - Older citizens
 - Families
 - Organizations
- Evaluate All Possibilities
 - Program models
 - Resources
 - Human
 - Financial
- Develop Suitable Program Structure
 - Coincide with existing network
 - Formal as needed, informal as possible
- Identify Collaborators
 - Assistance in each phase of development
 - Develop a team
 - Form formal and informal network
- Select Program Design
 - Appropriate to needs
 - Appropriate to resources

- Identify Roles
 - Organizationally
 - Agency representation
 - Volunteers
 - Student participants
 - Staffing requirements
- Recruit Creatively
 - Capitalize on resources
 - Design individual approaches
 - Create ongoing campaign
 - Garner assistance
- Train Appropriately
 - Clear and concise content
 - Approaches suited to population
 - Pre-service and in-service
 - Flexible to suit participants
- Pair Phone Pals Sensitively and Sensibly
 - Needs and availability of service
 - Individual dynamics of participants
 - Staff support required and available
- Follow-up
 - Frequent
 - At each level
- Evaluate
 - Jointly with partners
 - Established evaluation schedule

The intergenerational component of this project provides communities with many benefits beyond the telephone reassurance service. These include the opportunity to provide regular linkages between young and old that can enhance the self-esteem and quality of life for all involved. Concurrently, the individual dynamics of these populations presents unique challenges for the planner. Just as intergenerational programs cross age boundaries, they also cross organizational, structural and discipline boundaries.

Recommendation 2: When considering the intergenerational components of Phone Pal, it is recommended the planner identify the following:

- Characteristics of the aging population
- Dynamics of the aging volunteer
- Health needs and limitations of older candidates
- Motivations for applying
- Expectations of project

- Family supports
- History with children
- Ability of aging learner
- Individual's perspective on aging and aged.

The timetable for implementation of a Phone Pal project is a predominant variable when forecasting the potential success of the project.

Recommendation 3: That the timetable for implementation provide for the introduction, recruitment and enrollment for Phone Pal during the summer months; thus, assuring the availability of the service at the beginning of the school year.

Compliance with Recommendation 3 will greatly enhance the possibility of full implementation of Phone Pal during the first year. For a variety of reasons, that may not be possible; thus, planners should expect the possibility of a disappointing response to recruitment efforts during the initial phases of program implementation.

Recommendation 4: That program planners anticipate a period of two years before realization of full program implementation and plan for support of the project through that time period.

Phone Pal provides the planner maximum flexibility in developing design, service, partnership and utilization of networks. The flexibility occurs concurrently with unique demands on the planner's skill and expertise.

Recommendation 5: That the planner develop a style of flexibility and creativity that will enable the successful development of a Phone Pal project in his/her community.

V. SUMMARY

This manual outlines the process of developing the Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal and enables its replication in other communities. This telephone reassurance project for school-age children (8-13) presents a streamlined approach to programming because the service is provided while both the volunteers and students are in their own homes. As a result, the cost of this model can be significantly less than others which require significant space and staff support.

A unique component of this model is the focus on intergenerational linkages. Older persons are exclusively recruited to serve as senior Phone Pals for school-age children in their community. Thus, in addition to the reassurance provided by the daily phone call, youth participants are able to develop a personal relationship with a senior adult. Concurrently, the senior adults are able to sustain a feeling of worth and contribution, due to the service they provide for youths.

This model also dramatically illustrates the possibilities of uniting public, private and corporate sponsors for a mutual goal. Phone Pal illustrated the partnership between a state agency (Department of Aging), a school district (Mechanicsburg Area School District), a large utility (Bell of Pennsylvania) and a private, multi-service agency (Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc.)

Phone Pal is considered appropriate for many communities, particularly those with school-age children currently unserved by after-school programs and older persons looking for the opportunity to contribute to their community through volunteerism.

BUDGET OUTLINE

Salaries and Benefits

Staff Support

Mileage
Other Travel
Meetings/Conferences
Membership and Dues
Books and Subscriptions
Inservice Training
Staff Recruitment

Physical Plant Operations

Rent Facility
Contingency

Service Operations

Telephone
Postage
Printing
Promotional Material
Recruitment Advertising

Supplies

Office Supplies
Non-capitalized Office Equipment
Capitalized Office Equipment
Food Supplies
Kitchen Supplies

Allocated Administrative Costs

Management Support
Fiscal Support
Personnel Support

TRESSLER-LUTHERAN SERVICE ASSOCIATES

Appendix 2

Position Description

POSITION TITLE: PROJECT MANAGER - Mechanicsburg Phone Pal
LOCATION: Mechanicsburg Senior Adult Center
REPORTS TO: Director, Mechanicsburg Senior Adult Center
CLASSIFICATION: Half-time (twenty hours per week)
SALARY:

GENERAL STATEMENT
OF DUTIES: Program development and implementation

DUTIES:

- Initial development of program and implementation
- Provide staff support to Advisory Committee
- Recruit and supervise Project Secretary
- Recruit senior volunteers and supervise their activity
- Conduct training sessions for the senior Phone Pals
- Develop and coordinate promotional efforts with news media
- Network with other agencies and organizations

EDUCATION: Formalized educational requirements are flexible as emphasis will be on the persons abilities to perform the duries. Life experiences may compensate for degrees.

EXPERIENCE Emphasis will be on employment of a senior citizen. Experience in intergenerational programs or volunteer program development, or work within a school system will be advantageous.

Position Description

POSITION TITLE: PROJECT SECRETARY - Mechanicsburg Phone Pal
LOCATION: Mechanicsburg Senior Adult Center
REPORTS TO: Project Manager
CLASSIFICATION: Part-time (ten hours per week)
SALARY:

GENERAL STATEMENT
OF DUTIES:

Provide secretarial services for the project

DUTIES:

- Develop office files and record keeping procedures
- Respond to inquiries about the project
- Schedule appointments
- Assist Project Manager with office tasks
- Perform required typing and other general secretarial duties

EDUCATION: High school diploma or equivalent experience in an office environment is desired.

EXPERIENCE Experience in intergenerational or volunteer programs is beneficial but not required. Emphasis will be on the employment of a senior citizen.

Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc.

2331 Market Street, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011-4692

(717) 761-6920

January 7, 1987

TO: ASSIGNMENT EDITOR
FROM: William Swanger, Director of Public Information
SUBJECT: PRESS CONFERENCE, "Phone Pal" Program

Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center
97 West Portland Street
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055
(717) 697-5947

Wednesday, January, 14, 1987
10:30 a.m.

BACKGROUND: The Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal Program will pair children who are alone after school with senior adults for daily telephone contact. The program initially will serve children eight to 13 in the Mechanicsburg Area School District.

The program, reportedly the only one of its type in the state, provides a check on the well-being of both the "latchkey" child and the older adult. It also provides unlimited opportunities for educational and rewarding intergenerational friendships to develop.

Modeled on a program developed by Southwestern Bell, the Phone Pal program was developed with a \$16,450 grant from the Department of Aging. In addition, the costs of promotional and recruitment material have been underwritten by Bell of Pennsylvania.

The unique effort is a program of Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Camp Hill, in partnership with Bell of Pennsylvania, the state Department of Aging, the Mechanicsburg Area School District, and the senior adult center, which T-LSA sponsors.

Staff will be on hand Wednesday to provide further information. Representatives of all agencies involved will speak.

DIRECTIONS: Take Main Street in Mechanicsburg (Trindle Road from Camp Hill) to Market Street. Turn right onto North Market. Proceed about four blocks to Portland. Turn left on to Portland. Center is one block on left.



NEWS

Appendix 4a

William Swanger
Director of Public Information

Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc., 2331 Market Street, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011-4692, (717) 761-6920

to: Mechanicsburg/Harrisburg area media
date: 16 January 87
release: Upon receipt

MECHANICSBURG -- A program pairing senior adults with children alone after school is getting under way in the Mechanicsburg area.

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal, reportedly the only one of its type program in Pennsylvania, links through daily telephone contact senior adults and children aged eight to 13 whose parents' work schedules prevent them from being home when the child returns from school.

The unique effort is a program of Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Camp Hill, in partnership with Bell of Pennsylvania, the state Department of Aging, the Mechanicsburg Area School District, and the Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center, which T-LSA sponsors.

Modeled on a program of Southwestern Bell Telephone, the program has received a grant of \$16,450 from the Department of Aging. In addition, the cost of promotional and recruitment material has been underwritten by Bell of Pennsylvania.

The Phone Pal concept is simple, says Kathy Bell, Tressler's intergenerational programs specialist. "Program staff and school guidance counselors pair a child with an appropriate senior adult. Following a meeting with parents and one between the senior adult and the child, the pair work out a telephone schedule.

--(More)--

"This schedule," Bell says, "allows them to check on each other's well-being, with the senior adult making sure the child has arrived home from school safely and is okay. Beyond this, the program provides an exciting opportunity for the child and the older person to develop an educational and rewarding friendship. And it gives the area's senior citizens an opportunity to provide a community service."

In participating in the program, the school district "is trying to respond to a need identified by certain parent groups, concerned over the welfare of children after school," says R.L. "Ranny" Singiser, district assistant superintendent.

"Bringing children and senior adults together for mutual benefit has been a goal of the Department of Aging for many years," says state Secretary of Aging Alma R. Jacobs. "The grant to implement the Phone Pal program is one of several that we have made over the years to bring the public and private sectors together to benefit children, older persons, and their communities."

According to Kathy Bell, senior adults interested in the program are interviewed by staff and receive training in dealing with children and with possible emergencies.

The Phone Pal pairs will use their own telephones for the daily contact. The program's part-time project manager and secretary will work at the senior center, 97 W. Portland St.

There is no charge for participation in the program.

--30--

PAL-1-87004

Mechanicsburg
Area Senior
Adult Center

Mechanicsburg
Area School
District

Bell of
Pennsylvania
Department
of Aging

in partnership with

Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates, Inc.

a program of

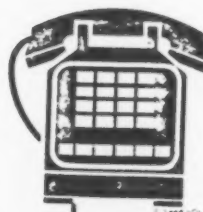
MECHANICSBURG AREA PHONE PAL



A CHILD NEEDS YOU...

BE A

PHONE PAL



What is a PHONE PAL?

A PHONE PAL is a person who calls another on a regular basis to check on that friend's wellbeing.

PHONE PAL was first developed by Southwestern Bell Telephone to help communities just like yours. It is now successful in four states in the Southwest (Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas).

Locally, Mechanicsburg Area PHONE PAL is a program of Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates and a partnership of organizations to help children, seniors and schools work together for everyone's benefit.

Who Benefits?

- CHILDREN on their own before or after school benefit. They need a dependable adult to talk with when they are home alone. A friend who will call to see they have arrived home from school safely and are comfortable there. A friend who will laugh with them and share their everyday experiences. A PHONE PAL just like you.
- SENIORS like you can benefit from a PHONE PAL experience and the new relationships that can develop when you share your time and energy with a family in your community.
- SCHOOLS benefit because they are concerned about the needs of children before and after the school day.

How does Mechanicsburg Area PHONE PAL operate?

Program staff are recruiting, screening and assigning PHONE PAL applicants now.

To become an official PHONE PAL, you must complete an application and provide some information about your background. An interview with a program staff member will follow. Then, you will receive special training in dealing with children and possible emergencies. This will help you respond to their questions and problems.

Program staff and school counselors will identify the best PHONE PAL for you and arrange for you to meet your PHONE PAL's parents. After you all agree to the relationship and a telephoning schedule, you will have opportunity to meet your new pal in person.

Then, all you need to do is call your PHONE PAL as scheduled. Soon, you will get to know each other and become good friends.

Be a PHONE PAL ...

It takes little time or trouble to be a PHONE PAL and there is no expense. To be successful, Mechanicsburg Area PHONE PAL needs caring senior citizens like you ... people wanting to make their community a better place for everybody to live.

Be a PHONE PAL and be rewarded with a friendship of a child who needs you!

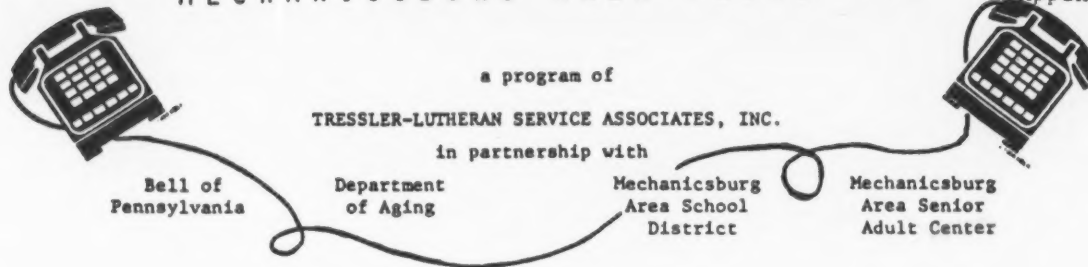
Applications are available at:

Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center
97 West Portland Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

(717)697-5947

MECHANICSBURG AREA PHONE PAL

Appendix 6



Reprinted from colored stock

Mechanicsburg Area PHONE PAL provides your child with a telephone link while home alone after school.

PHONE PAL has been developed in cooperation with your child's school because of concern for school-age children who are on their own after school. For many children and youth, this time alone can be a positive growing experience. And, having a reliable senior adult to talk to when parents are not available can make that time even more valuable.

Many senior citizens are eager to help the children and youth in their community. So, Tressler-Lutheran Service Associates and a partnership of organizations would like to bring your child and a senior adult together through Mechanicsburg Area PHONE PAL.

As PHONE PALS, the children and their senior partners can call to check on each other's well-being, share experiences of their day, and develop mutually rewarding relationships.

Currently, senior PHONE PAL applicants are being recruited and carefully screened by program staff. They will be specially trained to deal with children and possible emergencies.

Participation in PHONE PAL is for children and youth ages 8 - 13 and is without charge.

Enrollment forms are available from your child's school counselor and the Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center. Orientation will be provided for you and your child and you will have opportunity to meet and visit with your child's PHONE PAL. Then - you can work out a schedule of calls that best serves your child's needs. Your child's PHONE PAL will call your home or wait for your child's call according to that schedule.

You will soon discover that Mechanicsburg Area PHONE PAL is a helpful connection for you and your child. It can allow you to feel more comfortable about leaving your child on his or her own after school. And, it will help your child because their PHONE PAL is just a phone-call away!

For more information:

Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center
97 West Portland Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
(717)697-5947





Senior Adult Center

97 West Portland Street • Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055 (717) 697-5947

MECHANICSBURG AREA PHONE PAL

a program of
TRESSLER-LUTHERAN SERVICE ASSOCIATED, INC.

in partnership with

Bell of Pennsylvania	Department of Aging	Mechanicsburg Area School District	Mechanicsburg Area Senior Adult Center
-------------------------	------------------------	--	--

ENROLL YOUR CHILD NOW FOR SEPTEMBER 1987 . . .

Phone Pal is now available in the Mechanicsburg Area School District. Are you a working parent? Are you unable to be there when your child leaves for school or returns in the afternoon? If so, let us help you. We will match your youngster with a senior citizen who will call him or her daily at a pre-determined time. As Phone Pals, the children and their senior partners will check on each other's well-being, share the experiences of their day and become friends. This program is confidential and free of charge.

If interested, please detach lower section and mail by July 15. Do it now! Don't wait!

Postage will be paid.

Marilyn Chastek
Director

Please check the box you are interested in:-

☐ Yes, I would like to enroll my child in Phone Pal for the school year starting September '87. Please send me an application.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____

☐ I would like more information on Phone Pal:-

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____



Reprinted from colored stock

Please return to Appendix 7
PHONE PAL
Mechanicsburg Area Senior
Adult Center
97 West Portland Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

SENIOR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION - Phone Pal

Name _____ 2. Today's Date _____

Address _____

Telephone: (a) _____ (b) Emergency _____

Skills/ Special Training/Interests: (a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

Have you been a volunteer in the Mechanicsburg Public Schools Before? (a) Yes (b) No

If yes, (c) Year _____ (d) School _____ (e) Assignment _____

Days and Times Available:

PLEASE FILL IN CHART

	Morning			Afternoon		
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						

How did you hear of this Phone Pal Program? (a) Newspaper ()

(b) Friend () (c) Radio/TV () (d) School ()

(e) Other ()

Volunteer Reference: Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

() I will call my Phone Pal or () My Phone Pal may call me:

At the specified time above _____

Other times agreed _____

I would like to share the following interests/stories with my Phone Pal.

() Sports () Movies/TV () Past Experiences

() Hobbies () Pets () School work

() Other _____

I would be interested in participating in Phone Pal events organized by
program sponsors. () Yes () No

How do you think this program will benefit you? _____

Please list name, address, and phone number of person to contact if you do
not answer phone at appointed time.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME TO HELP THE STUDENTS
OF MECHANICSBURG.

MECHANICSBURG ARE PHONE PAL
Training Session for Seniors

Schedule

4/13/87

12:00 P.M.

Buffet Luncheon

12:45

Greetings and Introductions - Terry Bell

1:00 - 2:00 P.M.

Session I

Communications

Kathy Bell, Intergeneration Specialist

T/L S.A.

2:00 - 3:00 P.M.

Session II

Emergencies over the telephone and how to deal
with them.

John Calhoun, Crises Co-ordinator

Mental Health Center, Holy Spirit Hospital

3:00 - 3:30 P.M.

Session III

Children in Mechanicsburg Schools - a question and
answer session.

Paul Meck, Counselor, Mechanicsburg School
District

Sherry Allison, Counselor, Mechanicsburg School
District

3:30 - 4:30 P.M.

Session IV

Today's Child - Talking to them, listening to them
and developing a relationship with them.

Mickie Brandon, Counselor, Family and Children's
Service Center

4:30 - 5:00 P.M.

Session V

Question and Answer Period
All Panel members.



Senior Adult Center

97 West Portland Street • Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055

(717) 697-5947

P H O N E P A L *

Older adults
providing telephone reassurance
for latchkey children

Responsibilities

- * This information has been adapted from material copyrighted by Southwestern Bell Telephone. Permission for its use is gratefully appreciated.



Basic Information About the Phone Pal Program:

1. Phone Pal is a telephone reassurance program where a volunteer calls a child who is home alone before and after school (and on school holidays) to check on his or her well-being at agreed upon times.
2. T-LSA is sponsoring the program in partnership with local schools.
3. All participants in the program will be screened to ensure security.
4. All participants will receive training and orientation to the program.
5. Children and volunteers will be matched according to needs and interests.
6. There will be a meeting of the children, their parents and the volunteers. This will give Phone Pals a chance to meet as well as discuss emergency information and dos and don'ts.
7. After the Phone Pals have met, how and when the student and volunteer will get together on the telephone will be determined.
8. There will be periodic activities (possibly a picnic or a trip to a ball game) to bring participants together again.

The Responsibilities of the Volunteer:

1. To establish a telephone relationship with your Phone Pal child.
2. To place a call or receive a call from the child at the agreed upon time each day.
3. To show an interest in the child's well-being and daily life.
4. To participate in the screening and training processes.
5. To fill out all necessary forms to that you can be matched with a child according to mutual interests and need.
6. To attend meetings and events designed for Phone Pals, at no cost to volunteers or families and with transportation provided if needed. (Check with the Project Manager.)
7. To follow the Phone Pal Program policies regarding handling emergencies.
8. To report problems and concerns to the Project Manager.

The Responsibilities of the Phone Pal Family.

1. To have your child establish a telephone relationship with a Phone Pal volunteer.
2. To have your child receive or place a call at the agreed upon time each day.
3. To participate in the screening and orientation processes.
4. To fill out the necessary forms so that your child can be matched with a volunteer according to mutual interests and need.
5. To attend meetings and events designed for Phone Pals, at no cost to volunteers or families and with transportation provided if needed. (Check with the Project Manager.)
6. To inform the volunteer how best to contact you should the need arise.

1. The relationship between the volunteer and the child is basically a one-to-one friendship.
2. The volunteer can set reasonable limits with the child with regard to frequency, time and length of calls.
3. The relationship is a telephone friendship, with person-to-person contact limited to Phone Pal events.
4. Personal information shared between Phone Pals is confidential (exceptions should be determined by discussions between volunteer and parents).
5. The volunteer has no financial responsibility to the child.
6. The parent or legal guardian remains the disciplinarian. If a problem arises, the volunteer's responsibility ends with the reporting of it to the Project Manager.
7. Forbidding the child to call the Phone Pal as punishment is harmful to the relationship and to the program.
8. All participants (the parents, volunteers and Project Manager) should maintain contact so that they can share questions and concerns as they arise.
9. Volunteers and families will be provided a listing of project staff and community representatives to contact as necessary.



Senior Adult Center

97 West Portland Street • Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055

(717) 697-5947

AUTHORIZATION TO VIDEO TAPE

I authorize the video taping of my participation in the Phone Pal training sessions. I understand the tape will be used as follows:

1. Playback in training sessions
2. Trainer & program staff review and evaluation
3. Use in future training sessions

I understand that at no time will this video tape be used for any commercial purposes.

Signature

Witness

Date

MECHANICSBURG AREA PHONE PAL

Junior Phone PalEnrollment Form

1. Child's Name _____
(Last) (First) (Nickname)

(a) Sex _____ (b) Birthdate _____

2. Home Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

3. School: _____ Grade: _____ Counselor: _____

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

4. In case of emergency who should PHONE PAL call?

First Choice _____
(Name) (Relationship) (Telephone Number)

Second Choice _____
(Name) (Relationship) (Telephone Number)

Third Choice _____
(Name) (Relationship) (Telephone Number)

PARENT INFORMATION

5. Mother's Name: _____ Address: _____
(if different from child's)

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
(if different from child's)

Employed by: _____ Work Hours: _____

Work Address: _____

6. Father's Name _____ Address _____
(if different from child's)

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____
(if different from child's)

Employed by: _____ Work Hours: _____

Work Address: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

7. I request Phone Pal service for the following day(s) and time(s):

	Morning			Afternoon		
	6	7	8	4	5	6
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						

8. My child has the following interest: Please check all appropriate spaces below.

_____ Books _____ School work _____ Storytelling
 _____ Movies/TV _____ Sports _____ Hobbies (Explain)
 _____ Other (Explain) _____

9. Other things that would be helpful to know about my child or our family.

10. I heard about PHONE PAL from: _____ newspaper _____ school _____ friend
 _____ radio/tv other (explain) _____

 (Signature of Child)

 (Signature of parent)

 (Date)

 (Date)

Mechanicsburg Area Phone Pal

Timetable for Implementation

Implementation Task	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
<u>Staff Recruitment</u>									
Project Manager Selected									
Project Manager Selected									
<u>Advisory Committee</u>									
Members Appointed									
Schedule for Meetings									
Delineation of Cmte. Function									
<u>Program Recruitment</u>									
Schedule Delineated									
Promotional Materials Developed									
Schedule for Community Presentations									
Promotional Materials Distributed									
Schools									
Congregations									
Senior Groups									
Community Agencies									
Businesses/Shops									
<u>Media Campaign Developed</u>									
<u>Senior Applicants Recruited</u>									
<u>Junior Applicants Recruited</u>									
Community Presentations Conducted	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing

Implementation Task	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
<u>Screening/Training</u>									
Applications Developed									
Senior Applicant									
Junior Applicant									
Reference Forms Developed									
Screening Interviews Conducted									
References Cleared									
Training Content Developed									
Training Materials Prepared									
Trainers Identified									
Training Sessions Conducted									
<u>Phone Pal Pairings</u>									
Identification of Pairs									
Orientation of Phone Pal Pairs and Families									
Follow-up Interviews									
<u>Evening Socials/Community Events</u>									
Planning & Scheduling of Programs									
Socials/Events Conducted									
<u>Program Review</u>									
Ongoing Assessment by Advisory Committee									
End of Project Evaluation									

Appendix 12 cont

Implementation Task	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
<u>Program Review (cont)</u>									
Final Report									
Draft Prepared									
Review by									
Final copy to									
<u>Project "How-to" Guide</u>									
Draft Prepared									
Review by									
Final Copy to									